

IN BRIEF

A SUBSTITUTE NAME FOR THE BIOKO RACE OF *PYCNONOTUS VIRENS*

In a recent letter Mr R. J. Dowsett reminded me that *Andropadus*, which was long combined in the genus *Pycnonotus*, has again been recognized as a distinct genus (cf. Keith, Urban & Fry 1992, *Birds of Africa* Vol. 4: 287). Thus *Pycnonotus virens poensis* Dickerman, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 114: 276, was preoccupied even when published by *Stelgidillas poensis* Alexander (Sipopo, Fernando Po). *Stelgidillas* Oberholser 1905 (*Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus.* 22: 30), the type of which is *Andropadus gracilirostris*, is a synonym of the latter genus. Therefore I propose the substitute name: ***Andropadus virens amadoni***, nom. nov. Replaces *Pycnonotus virens poensis* Dickerman, 1994, not *Stelgidillas poensis* Alexander, 1903, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 13: 35 (now = *Andropadus gracilirostris poensis*).

The name recognizes the contribution of Dr Dean Amadon to our knowledge of the birds of the Gulf of Guinea.

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THE THREAT STATUS OF THE SIDAMO LARK

Good as it was to read Iain Robertson's account of his observations of the Sidamo Lark *Heteromira fra sidamoensis* in November 1994 (evidently not 1974, as first indicated in his article) (*Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 115: 241–243), he is mistaken in regarding the "Indeterminate" status assigned to this species in *Threatened Birds of Africa* (1985) as inconsistent. He bases this view on the fact that two other endemics of southern Ethiopia were classified as "Rare" despite their larger ranges and greater proportion of available habitat. I suspect the confusion arises because the word "indeterminate" suggests less urgency than the word "rare".

The categories used in *Threatened Birds of Africa*, which were those then formally adopted by IUCN for all threatened species classification, are explained in the Introduction (pp. xxv–xxvi). I quote: " 'Indeterminate' applies to 'taxa known to be Endangered, Vulnerable or Rare but where there is not enough information to say which of the three categories is appropriate' (. . . it should be noted that, since an Indeterminate species can be at best Rare, Indeterminate is a category of threat higher than Rare)."

The assignment of Indeterminate to the Sidamo Lark in 1985 was made in the knowledge of John Ash's 1974 observation, since he had kindly furnished an early draft of the paper he published in *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* (105: 141–143) in 1985, but also in the light of his *in litt.*